

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 10203 01 OF 02 092006Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----017309 092010Z /62
O 091836Z AUG 78 ZFF-6
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4784
INFO WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 10203

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR SECRETARY VANCE FROM BILL QUANDT

WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, IS, US
SUBJECT: QUANDT MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN

1. I MET TODAY WITH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND HIS COLLEAGUES FOR ABOUT ONE HOUR AND 30 MINUTES. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY YADIN, DAYAN, WEIZMAN, TEHILA, RUBENSTIEN, AND PATTIR. AMBASSADOR LEWIS AND BOB BLACKWILL WERE WITH ME. AT MY REQUEST, BEGIN READILY AGREED TO ASK THE STENOTYPYST TO LEAVE, SO THERE WILL BE NO VERBATIM RECORD.

2. I BEGAN BY THANKING THE PRIME MINISTER FOR RECEIVING ME DURING HIS VACATION, AND I EXTENDED YOUR BEST WISHES. I TOLD HIM THAT YOU HAD VERY MUCH APPRECIATED THE SPIRIT IN WHICH YOUR TALKS IN JERUSALEM HAD TAKEN PLACE, AND I EXTENDED TO HIM YOUR CONGRATULATIONS ON HIS UPCOMING BIRTHDAY (AUGUST 16). TURNING TO THE TALKS IN ALEXANDRIA, I DESCRIBED SADAT'S REACTION TO THE
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PRESIDENT'S INVITATION AS VERY ENTHUSIASTIC. SADAT DID NOT HESITATE IN ACCEPTING, AND HE POSED NO CONDITIONS. I NOTED YOUR IMPRESSION THAT HE RECOGNIZED THE HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TALKS AT CAMP DAVID AND THE CHANCE THAT THEY WILL HELP MOVE THINGS TOWARD PEACE. IN ADDITION, I EMPHASIZED YOUR BELIEF THAT SADAT DOES WANT PEACE AND THAT

HE WILL APPROACH THESE TALKS IN A SERIOUS SPIRIT AND WITH GOODWILL. LATER IN OUR CONVERSATION, BEGIN RETURNED TO THIS POINT AND ASKED IF SADAT HAD REALLY ACCEPTED THE INVITATION IMMEDIATELY, WITHOUT MAKING DEMANDS, AND WITHOUT POSING PRECONDITIONS. I EMPHATICALLY STATED THAT HE HAD MADE HIS DECISION BEFORE MOVING ON TO ANY DISCUSSION OF SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES WITH YOU.

3. I THEN TOLD BEGIN THAT YOU HAD STRESSED TO SADAT THE GREAT IMPORTANCE OF TONING DOWN THE RHETORIC AND ENDING PUBLIC ATTACKS ON ISRAEL AND BEGIN IN THE EGYPTIAN PRESS. YOU HAD EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR A POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE FOR THE CAMP DAVID TALKS, AND SADAT SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD AND WAS READY TO TURN A NEW PAGE. NO MATTER WHAT IS SAID IN THE COMING WEEKS, HE WILL NOT RESPOND PUBLICLY. I NOTED TO BEGIN THAT YOU HOPED RESTRAINT ON BOTH SIDES WILL HELP CREATE A GOOD ATMOSPHERE FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF TALKS.

4. NEXT I MENTIONED SADAT'S FEELING THAT TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE. IM EMPHASIZED THAT SADAT MADE NO THREATS CONCERNING THE OCTOBER DATE, AND I RELAYED TO BEGIN SADAT'S STATEMENT TO YOU THAT HE DOES NOT INTEND TO TAKE ANY MILITARY ACTION IN OCTOBER. I STRONGLY EMPHASIZED THAT THIS SHOULD BE TREATED AS A VERY SENSITIVE POINT, AND THAT I WAS NOT RELAYING IT AS A
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MESSAGE FROM SADAT TO BEGIN, BUT RATHER AS SOMETHING WHICH SADAT HAD SAID TO YOU WHICH WE THOUGHT THE ISRAELIS WOULD WANT TO KNOW.

5. DESCRIBING THE DISCUSSION OF THE CAMP DAVID TALKS, I TOLD BEGIN THAT SADAT IS PLEASED THAT THERE IS NO TIME LIMIT AND THAT THERE WILL BE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY FOR FULL DISCUSSIONS. SADAT HAD STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF EACH LEADER BEING IN A POSITION TO MAKE DECISIONS, AND HE WILL HAVE WITH HIM THOSE ADVISORS THAT HE NEEDS TO HAVE IN SUCH A POSITION. I MENTIONED THAT IT WAS YOUR JUDGEMENT THAT EACH DELEGATION SHOULD CONSIST OF NO MORE THAN EIGHT OR NINE PEOPLE, AND THAT WE DID NOT KNOW WHO SADAT WAS PLANNING TO BRING WITH HIM AT THIS POINT. BOTH BEGIN AND YADIN EXPRESSED INTEREST IN WHETHER GAMASY WOULD BE PRESENT, WITH YADIN INDICATING THAT IF GAMASY WERE AT CAMP DAVID IT WOULD GIVE SOME INDICATION OF WHAT THE EGYPTIANS WERE PREPARED TO DISCUSS. I SAID THAT WE WOULD INFORM THE ISRAELIS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ABOUT THE COMPOSITION OF THE EGYPTIAN DELEGATION.

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 10203 02 OF 02 092010Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4785
INFO WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 10203

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR SECRETARY VANCE FROM BILL QUANDT

WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI

6. THE PRIME MINISTER WAS INTERESTED IN PERSUADING THE QUESTION OF HOW THE TALKS MIGHT BE CONDUCTED AT CAMP DAVID. I SAID THAT WE WERE QUITE OPEN-MINDED AND HOPED THAT INFORMAL TALKS COULD TAKE PLACE AMONG THE THREE LEADERS AND THEIR ADVISORS, AS APPROPRIATE, AND THAT THERE NEED NOT BE ANY RIGID AGENDA. BEGIN RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT THERE SHOULD NONETHELESS BE SOME ORDER IN THE DISCUSSIONS, AND HE IMPLIED THAT HE THOUGHT THE TALKS COULD USEFULLY LAST SEVERAL DAYS, BUT PERHAPS NOT THE 10 OR 14 DAYS THAT HAD BEEN MENTIONED AS POSSIBILITIES.

7. I EXPLAINED THAT SADAT'S INABILITY TO ACCEPT THE AUGUST 27 DATE WAS DUE TO RAMADAN, AND THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO BEGIN DISCUSSIONS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE END OF THE MONTH OF FASTING. SADAT WILL ARRIVE IN WASHINGTON, I SAID, ON SEPTEMBER 4, AND PLANS TO GO DIRECTLY BY HELICOPTER TO CAMP DAVID. BEGIN RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT HE INTENDS TO GO TO NEW YORK ON SEPTEMBER 3, WHERE HE WILL SPEND THE NIGHT AND HAVE
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HIS NORMAL CONSULTATIONS, ON SEPTEMBER 4 HE WILL TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON, AND WOULD HOPE TO GO TO CAMP DAVID BY HELICOPTER.

8. CONCLUDING THIS SECTION OF MY PRESENTATION, I REFERRED TO SADAT'S CONTINUED CONCERN WITH DEVELOPMENTS IN AFRICA AND WITH SOVIET POLICY, EMPHASIZING THAT SADAT SAYS A PEACE SETTLEMENT WILL HELP HIM TO DEAL WITH THESE OTHER PROBLEMS CONFRONTING HIM. BEGIN ASKED IF SADAT WOULD WANT TO TALK ABOUT AFIRCA AT CAMP DAVID, AND I REPLIED THAT THE INFORMAL SETTING AT CAMP DAVID WOULD PROBABLY BE CONDUCIVE TO DISCUSSING VIRTUALLY ANY ISSUE, BUT I HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING IF SADAT WOULD WANT TO DISCUSS THE ISSUES OF AFRICA AND SOVIET POLICY IN DEPTH.

9. DAYAN INTERVENED TO ASK HIS USUAL QUESTION OF WHETHER SADAT WILL GO TO CAMP DAVID PREPARED TO MAKE DECISIONS CONCERNING SINAI AND THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM, OR WHETHER HE WAS SIMPLY TALKING ABOUT DECISIONS ON A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. HE ASKED IF I THOUGHT EGYPT WAS PREPARED TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL, NOT NECESSARILY A TREATY, EVEN IF THE GOLAN PROBLEM WERE NOT INCLUDED. I RESPONDED THAT I COULD NOT SPECULATE ON WHAT MIGHT COME OUT OF THE TALKS AT CAMP DAVID, AND THAT WE WOULD OBVIOUSLY HOPE FOR AS MUCH AGREEMENT AS POSSIBLE, A POINT REINFORCED BY AMBASSADOR LEWIS. I WENT ON TO SAY THAT IT WAS MY IMPRESSION THAT SADAT WAS STILL INTERESTED IN BROAD PRINCIPLES, WHICH COULD SERVE AS A FRAMEWORK IN WHICH TO EXPLORE IN MORE DETAIL THE ISSUES OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA. DAYAN REPLIED THAT HE WAS AFRAID SADAT REALLY ONLY WANTS TO DECIDE THAT THERE CAN BE NO NEGOTIATIONS OVER
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SOVEREIGNTY OR TERRITORY, AND THAT HE IS NOT PREPARED FOR PRACTICAL UNDERSTANDING. HE SAID THAT HE HOPED THAT HE WAS WRONG, BUT THAT HE WAS AFRAID THAT SADAT ONLY WANTED DECISIONS ON BROAD PRINCIPLES.

10. THE REMAINDER OF OUR TALK DEALT ALMOST ENTIRELY WITH LEBANON AND THE DANGER THAT DEVELOPMENTS THERE COULD HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE TALKS AT CAMP DAVID (SEPTTEL). BEGIN EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR MY COMING TO SEE HIM, AND REPEATED THAT YOUR VISIT HAD BEEN A GREAT SUCCESS. ON LEAVING, I WAS CONFRONTED BY A NUMBER OF REPORTERS BUT MADE NO COMMENTS AT ALL ABOUT THE TALKS.
LEWIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, MEETING REPORTS, MEETINGS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, PLANNING MEETINGS, NEGOTIATIONS, PEACE TALKS, CAT-C, CHEROKEE 8-9-78
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV10203
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P840137-1619
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780880/aaaacphn.tel
Line Count: 224
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fbd0ea65-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1787025
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: QUANDT MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER BEGIN
TAGS: PEPR, IS, US, (QUANDT, WILLIAM), (BEGIN, MENACHEM)
To: STATE SS MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fbd0ea65-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014